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Summary record of the 28th meeting
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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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Revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation

Agenda item 148: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 135: Programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017 (*continued*)

Second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017 (A/72/606 and A/72/647)

1. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017 (A/72/606), said that the report provided an estimate of the anticipated level of expenditure under the programme budget for the biennium, taking into account actual expenditures for the first 22 months of the biennium, projected requirements for the last two months of 2017, and changes in inflation and exchange rates. The anticipated final level of expenditure amounted to $5,681.6 million, reflecting a net increase of $61.4 million compared with the revised appropriation of $5,620.2 million for the biennium. That difference was primarily attributable to commitments of $37.8 million authorized for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses following the approval of the revised appropriation; and to an increase of $30.3 million related to post incumbency and other changes, resulting from increased requirements of $58.5 million for posts and $24.3 million under other staff costs, and reduced net requirements of $52.2 million related to other non-post objects of expenditure. Those increases were partly offset by a decrease of $6.7 million attributable to favourable rates of exchange of the United States dollar in relation to, inter alia, the Swiss franc and the euro, and favourable inflation rates for post and non-post objects of expenditure. The presentation of the report had been enhanced with the inclusion of graphs illustrating the proposed changes under posts, other staff costs and other non-post objects of expenditure. Approval was sought to appropriate an additional amount of $37.8 million for the funding of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses and for the subventions to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone.

2. Following the issuance of the second performance report, the Secretary-General had approved an additional commitment authority to re-establish observation operations in the Syrian Arab Republic until 31 December 2017, representing an increase of $1.1 million over the provision of $24 million sought under General Assembly resolution 70/250 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. In addition, the biennium 2016–2017 was the first full biennium for which the implementation of approved budgets was reflected in the Umoja enterprise resource planning system, and because expenditures were recorded in Umoja by nature of expense, there were variances between the appropriation and the estimated final level of expenditure under some budget classes. However, such variances did not imply a change in the nature of the initially budgeted requirements.

3. Projected income for the biennium was estimated at $553.7 million, representing an increase of $14.5 million over the income estimates approved a year earlier. That difference reflected increases under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, income section 2, General income, and income section 3, Services to the public. Overall, the anticipated final level of expenditure and income for the biennium 2016–2017 reflected a net increase of $46.9 million, representing 1 per cent of the net revised appropriation and estimated income.

4. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/647), said that the Advisory Committee encouraged the Secretary-General to continue improving the presentation of performance reports, in particular by providing a more detailed analysis of overall expenditure trends over time. With regard to the practice of forward purchasing, whereby the Organization entered into agreements to purchase foreign currency on a future date at a predetermined exchange rate, the Advisory Committee recalled that the main advantage of using forward rates was the predictability that they provided to the budget process. It therefore stressed the need to adopt a consistent approach to setting such rates, including by establishing a fixed purchase date for entering into forward contracts. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the revised estimates under the expenditure sections and the related income estimates for the biennium 2016–2017.

Agenda item 136: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (*continued*)

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions and its twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh special sessions (A/72/7/Add.35, A/72/602 and A/72/602/Add.1)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54: Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/72/7/Add.38; A/C.5/72/11)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.45/Rev.1: Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament (A/72/7/Add.37; A/C.5/72/12)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.50/Rev.1: Twentieth anniversary and promotion of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (A/72/7/Add.41; A/C.5/72/14)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.49/Rev.1: Effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights (A/72/7/Add.40; A/C.5/72/15)

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/72/L.7: International legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (A/72/7/Add.42; A/C.5/72/18)

Contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/72/7/Add.43; A/C.5/72/20)

Revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation (A/72/7/Add.36 and A/72/646)

Agenda item 148: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (*continued*) (A/72/7/Add.36 and A/72/641)

5 **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's reports on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions and its twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh special sessions (A/72/602 and A/72/602/Add.1), said that the Council had adopted 79 resolutions and decisions with financial implications at the five sessions in 2017, compared to 73 in 2016. In support of those resolutions and decisions, the Secretary-General requested approval of additional appropriations, representing charges against the contingency fund, of $21.7 million, comprising $2.8 million under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management; $18.8 million under section 24, Human rights; $10,000 under section 28, Public information; $73,100 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva; and $17,000 under section 34, Safety and security, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019. He also requested approval of the establishment of three new P-3 posts under section 24 and of an additional appropriation in the amount of $52,800 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

6. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54: Further measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/C.5/72/11), she said that, under the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would be requested to establish a United Nations Group of Governmental Experts, with a membership of up to 25 Member States, to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Group would hold two two-week sessions in Geneva in 2018 and 2019 and a two-day open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting in New York in 2019. Implementation of the request would require additional resources in the amount of $994,300 to cover costs related to meeting servicing, documentation, technical services, consultancy and travel by representatives. Those requirements would be reflected under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, section 4, Disarmament, and section 29F, Administration, Geneva, of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

7. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.45/Rev.1: Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament (A/C.5/72/12), she said that, under the draft resolution, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to convene in New York, from 14 to 16 May 2018, a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament, as well as a one-day organizational meeting prior to the conference. Implementation of the request would require additional resources in the amount of $250,000 to cover costs related to, inter alia, meeting servicing, documentation, webcasting, website production and maintenance services. Those requirements would be reflected under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section

4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019 and would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

8. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.50/Rev.1: Twentieth anniversary and promotion of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (A/C.5/72/14), she said that, under the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide, inter alia, to request the Secretary-General to undertake, in cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and in consultation with States and other United Nations actors, a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the ways in which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) could give due consideration to the Declaration. The conclusions and recommendations emanating from that analysis would be presented in a report to the Assembly at its seventy-third session. In order to implement the request, an additional appropriation in the amount of $146,000 was required to cover the cost of one general temporary assistance position at the P-4 level for six months, the cost of travel of three high-level international experts, and the production of pre-session documentation. Those requirements, comprising $32,200 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and $113,800 under section 24, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019, would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

9. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.49/Rev.1: Effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights (A/C.5/72/15), she said that, under the draft resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. To implement the request, the Secretary-General proposed an additional appropriation of $80,500, which would be reflected under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section 24, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

10. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1: Rights of the child (A/C.5/72/16), she said that, under the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to increase her engagement with States, United Nations bodies and agencies, regional organizations and especially subregional organizations, and to increase public awareness activities, including by collecting, assessing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned, in accordance with existing mandates. Implementation of the request would entail additional resources in the amount of $671,800 to cover costs related to the establishment of two posts of Political Affairs Officer and related non-post requirements. Those resources would be reflected under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

11. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/72/L.7: International legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (A/C.5/72/18), she said that, under the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would be requested to provide support for the convening of an intergovernmental conference to prepare the text of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention and to consider the related recommendations of the preparatory committee established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/292, with a view to developing the instrument as soon as possible. The conference would be held in New York during 2018–2020. In order to implement the request, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources in the amount of $2.2 million to cover costs related to, inter alia, meeting servicing, documentation, security and public information services. Those requirements would be reflected under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, section 28, Public information, and section 34, Safety and security, of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund. Furthermore, resource requirements for mandated activities to be carried out in 2020 would be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2020–2021.

12. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/C.5/72/20), she recalled that, in the context of the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2018–2019, the General Assembly had decided that the

level of the contingency fund should be set at $40.5 million dollars, or 0.75 per cent of the preliminary estimate for the biennium. Potential new charges against the fund presented in the report amounted to $41.3 million, reflecting the information available as at 15 December 2017. Since the issuance of the report, the Advisory Committee had made its recommendations on the proposals representing charges against the contingency fund for 2018–2019, and the Fifth Committee had made recommendations on the Secretary-General's proposal for the renovation of the North Building at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (A/72/367) and on the revised estimates relating to the Office of Counter-Terrorism (A/72/117). Those recommendations had reduced the potential charges to $39.4 million, resulting in a remaining balance of $1 million, which would be adjusted further to reflect the Fifth Committee's recommendations on the proposals under its consideration.

13. Introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation (A/72/646) and revised estimates for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation (A/72/641), she said that the reports provided updated projections, as at December 2017, for inflation and the effect of the evolution of operational rates of exchange in 2017 on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and the proposed budget for the Mechanism for 2018–2019. Taking into account the recommendations of the Advisory Committee that had been available at the time of the preparation of the reports, the requirements for the proposed programme budget would amount to $5.552 million and the requirements for the proposed budget for the International Residual Mechanism would amount to $232.7 million.

14. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council (A/72/7/Add.35), said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the three proposed P-3 Human Rights Officer posts to support the activities mandated by the Council in its resolutions 34/3, 34/16 and 35/9. It maintained its recommendations against the 10 general temporary assistance positions requested to support mandated activities under Human Rights Council resolutions 34/22, 34/24, 34/25, 34/26 and 35/33, which it had previously made following its review of requests for authorization to enter into commitments in connection with those resolutions. The Advisory Committee also recommended reductions to the proposed requirements for travel, simultaneous interpretation, sound technicians and recording services. Subject to the recommendations and observations in its report (A/72/7/Add.35), the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals.

15. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54: Further measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/72/7/Add.38), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of resources for the services of one sound technician, instead of the two proposed by the Secretary-General, for the meetings of the proposed United Nations Group of Governmental Experts. The Advisory Committee had previously commented on the inconsistency of approaches with regard to operational and cost requirements for sound technicians, noting that those requirements should be included in the cost components for meetings support services. It also noted the need for transparency with respect to the estimated cost for simultaneous interpretation and requested the Secretary-General to provide details in that regard to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the matter.

16. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.45/Rev.1: Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament (A/72/7/Add.37), he said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would result in a reduction of $13,800 in the additional resources requested by the Secretary-General. With regard to the resources requested for simultaneous interpretation during the proposed high-level international conference on disarmament, the Advisory Committee was of the view that the methodology applied to determine resource estimates for interpretation lacked clarity and consistency. In particular, it questioned the rationale for maintaining two parallel costing parameters, namely, a parameter based on a per assignment rate used before 2016 and another parameter based on a per day rate introduced in 2016, and trusted that more clarification in that regard would be provided to the General Assembly in the context of its consideration of the relevant statements of programme budget implications relating to the draft resolutions before the Assembly.

17. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.50/Rev.1: Twentieth anniversary and promotion of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of

Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (A/72/7/Add.41), he said that the Advisory Committee was of the view that one general temporary assistance position at the P-4 level for three months would suffice to perform, with the support of existing expert staff within OHCHR and other United Nations entities, the activities required in connection with the comprehensive analysis requested by the Secretary-General. It therefore recommended a corresponding reduction in the proposed resource requirements for the position.

18. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.49/Rev.1: Effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights (A/72/7/Add.40), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended against the approval of the proposed resources for one general temporary assistance position at the P-4 level to conduct the work required in connection with the report requested in the draft resolution, as there were sufficient staffing resources within the Secretariat to perform that work, with the support of experts from among the membership of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. As the Advisory Committee had been informed that the Secretary-General considered amounts of up to $39,000 for individual draft resolutions too minimal to justify requests for statements of programme budget implications, it recommended that the requirements proposed for documentation services under section 2 of the proposed programme budget should be absorbed within the resources to be approved for the biennium 2018–2019.

19. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1: Rights of the child (A/72/7/Add.39), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended a 10 per cent reduction in the proposed resources for staff travel. It also recommended that a P-4 general temporary assistance position, instead of the proposed P-4 post, should be established to support the requested activities.

20. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/72/L.7: International legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (A/72/7/Add.42), he said that the Advisory Committee was not convinced of the need for the resources requested for overtime for conference room security officers covering late meetings of the proposed intergovernmental conference to develop an international legally binding instrument under the Convention, when no such meetings were envisaged in the draft resolution. It therefore recommended a reduction of $54,327 in the resources requested under section 34 of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019.

21. In conclusion, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the six draft resolutions, additional resource requirements in the amount of approximately $4.1 million would be required under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, which would require an additional appropriation to be approved by the Assembly and would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

22. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/72/7/Add.43), he said that an updated list of charges against the contingency fund, reflecting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee that had not been available at the time of the finalization of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/72/20), should be provided to the General Assembly. Taking into account the observations presented in its report (A/72/7/Add.43), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly should consider the potential charges against the contingency fund related to the new and expanded mandates outlined by the Secretary-General, and offer him guidance accordingly.

23. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange (A/72/7/Add.36), he said that, overall, the Advisory Committee had no objection to the revised estimates arising from the recosting of the effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation. It nevertheless recommended against the proposed revision of the recosting methodology for the International Trade Centre, as it was not convinced by the justifications provided for the change.

24. With regard to the effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation on the proposed budget for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Advisory Committee recalled its related report (A/72/654), in which it recommended that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments for the maintenance of the Mechanism for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2018 and should submit a revised budget proposal for the Mechanism for the biennium 2018–2019. Consequently, the Advisory

Committee did not recommend recosting of the proposed budget for the Mechanism.

25. **Ms. Silvera Flores** (Uruguay), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru, said that, as sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/72/L.21/Rev.1, those delegations were of the view that the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict should be provided with the resources necessary to fulfil its critical mandate of protecting children affected by armed conflict and breaking the cycles of violence that perpetuated such conflict. Taking into account the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, they supported the approval of one or two new posts under the proposed programme budget for the Office for 2018–2019 in order to improve its work at the subregional level and promote dissemination of public information and the exchange of best practices among countries.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.